



BUTEO MELANOSTERNON: *Gould.*

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Black-breasted Buzzard.

Buteo melanosternon, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VIII. p. 162.

G'oo-dap, Aborigines of the mountain districts of Western Australia.

If we examine the Australian members of the family of *Falconidæ*, we cannot fail to observe that it comprises representatives of most of the forms inhabiting similar latitudes in the northern hemisphere; no example of the genus *Buteo* had, however, been recorded as an inhabitant of Australia until I discovered the present species, which is more nearly allied to the *Buteo Jackall* of the Cape of Good Hope and the Red-tailed Buzzard (*Buteo Borealis*) of America than to any other. It is a fine and noble species, and although it does not appear to be common in any part of the colonies, it ranges over all the southern portion of the country. I have received it from Swan River, and procured it myself during my journey into the interior of New South Wales, about two hundred miles northwards of Sydney; I have also a specimen which was killed on the Liverpool Plains by one of the natives in my party.

The Black-breasted Buzzard generally flies high in the air, through which it soars in large circles, much after the manner of the Wedge-tailed Eagle; its black breast and the large white mark at the base of the primaries being very conspicuous when seen from beneath.

The sexes are alike in colouring but present the usual difference in size, the male being the smallest.

Crown of the head, face, chin, chest and centre of the abdomen deep black, passing into chestnut-red on the flanks, thighs and under tail-coverts; back of the head chestnut-red, becoming black in the centre of each feather; shoulders whitish buff; all the upper surface deep brownish black, margined with chestnut-red; primaries white at the base, deep black for the remainder of their length; cere and base of the bill purplish flesh-colour, passing into black at the tip; irides wood-brown; feet white tinged with lilac.

The Plate represents a male about two-thirds of the natural size.